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Exploration of College Students' Psychological Anxiety towards Modular Distance Learning During a Pandemic.

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Abstract

The study aimed to investigate the anxiety levels among college students during the COVID-19 pandemic towards modular distance learning (MDL). The survey involved 336 students from Southern Negros Occidental, Philippines, enrolled in eight degree programs. Results showed high anxiety levels, with students with good internet connections having moderate anxiety levels. Those with two gadgets showed significant increases in anxiety. Teachers' motivation through printed modules for practice was an essential factor.

Keywords*: Attitude, Anxiety, Modular distance learning, Pandemic, Internet connection, Gadget*

1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 caused unprecedented school closures and class suspensions for over a year. Some countries adapted to the virtual ecosystem by providing technology-based platforms for online learning, with online distance learning already prevalent in many universities abroad.

In the Philippines, schools have switched to online learning to avoid health risks from the virus. However, students from rural areas who need internet connectivity must stay in city boarding houses. Internet connectivity remains a significant issue, especially in rural areas. Most state/city colleges and universities have adopted non-internet-based instruction, as seen at West Visayas State University-Himamaylan City Campus.

In April 2020, a campus survey in the Philippines revealed that 90% of students needed more internet access, weak cell phone signals, no computer, and an inability to install online applications like Zoom and Google Meet. As a result, the campus implemented Modular Distance Learning (MDL) to accommodate these limitations.

Saroha (2014) defines distance learning as a method that prevents distance from affecting learning processes, particularly during the pandemic when travel restrictions are minimal and technological infrastructure limitations exist for both the campus and students.

MDL involves teachers creating personalised self-learning modules in print or electronic formats. These modules are sent to students via Facebook Messenger Group Chat, a platform for asynchronous interactions and addressing queries. The platform has become a discussion forum, but participation is optional due to internet connection issues. The printed modules are sent to Local Government Unit (LGU) Centres, and students can claim their modules from their LGU focal persons. In addition to modules, students are provided with syllabi, course outlines, and course guides. Some teachers also offer additional attachments, such as photocopies of

articles, sample activities, and rubrics. Course guides outline expected outputs and the submission and retrieval schedules.

Despite agencies' preparations, implementing MDL faced challenges and varied effects. Anxiety, a fear of adverse outcomes due to physical, social, or performance threats, can manifest in various forms, such as phobias, generalised anxiety, separation anxiety, social phobia, panic attacks, and obsessive-compulsive disorders. These individuals may experience symptoms or behaviours ranging from simple to complex.

Common factors causing anxiety among learners include school refusals, poor academic performance, impaired school functioning, and increased dropout rates. Implementing Multi-Disciplinary Learning (MDL) during the COVID-19 pandemic has led to students experiencing anxiety in various aspects of their learning process, including study adjustment, independent learning, unconducive environments, and difficulty understanding lessons. Additionally, students face trauma from family members infected by the virus, quarantine, lockdown, and loss of loved ones, all while struggling to comply with school requirements without direct assistance from instructors.

In light of the experiences mentioned earlier by the researcher in implementing the MDL on their campus, the present Research was conducted.

The study aimed to explore the anxiety of college students towards Modular Distance Learning during the pandemic.

Specifically, it sought answers to the following questions:

1. What is the student’s level of anxiety during the MDL when taken as an entire group and when classified as gender, geographical location, availability of gadgets, access to an internet connection, the daily average number of hours spent studying, and availability of study/support group?
2. Is there a significant difference in the students’ anxiety during the MDL when classified as gender, geographical location, availability of gadgets, access to an internet connection, the daily average number of hours spent studying, and availability of study/support group?
3. What indicators relating to MDLwere the students highly anxious about during the pandemic?

2. Review Of Related Literature

The paper investigates the impact of modular distance learning on students' anxiety levels during the pandemic. Beiteret al. (2015) identified factors that affect depression, anxiety, and stress of college students,which include academic performance, pressure to succeed, and post-graduation plans.

According to England et al. (2019), anxiety experienced by students can adversely affect their performance in class and their persistence in learning. The same paper reported that the respondents said the following types of classroom anxiety: (1) general class, test, communication, and social anxiety; (2) perceived course difficulty; (3) intention to stay in the major; and (4) demographic variables.

Meanwhile, Beiter et al. (2015) reported thatthe most stressed, anxious, and depressed students in terms of demographics were (1) transferees, (2) upper-level students, and (3) students living off-campus.Colleges should review mental health concerns among students and tailor treatment programs to meet individual needs, as mental health issues may hinder academic success.

Furthermore, the Centre for Collegiate Mental Health (2022) reported that students’ anxiety has been consistently the most common concern identified by therapists and counsellors in recent years.Similarly, Cooper et al. (2018) write that high anxiety levels could impede students' academic performance and persistence.

With the advent of new technology in communication, several studies have been conducted about the mental health of human beings. Demirci et al. (2014) found that smartphone addiction contributes to depression and anxiety; i.e., females score significantly higher than males.In the same paper, smartphone addiction was definedas the overuse of smartphones causing disruptions to users’ daily lives.Anxiety scores were expectedly

higher among respondents in the “high smartphone users” group, with depression and daytime dysfunction.Depression or major depressive disorder may be caused by feelings of sadness and a loss of interest in activities once enjoyed (Alharbi et al., 2019).On the other hand, daytime dysfunctions vary and may include the following: (a) social, vocational and educational dysfunctions, (b) mood disturbances, (c) lack of energy or motivation, (d) hyperactivity, (e) aggression, (f) an increase in errors at school or work, or (g) worries about sleep (The Insomnia and Sleep Institute of Arizona, 2023).

The Smartphone Addiction Scale scores show positive correlations with depression, anxiety, and sleep quality, suggesting that smartphone overuse may lead to depression and anxiety, causing sleep issues. University students with high scores should be monitored for smartphone addiction.

Ozdin and Ozdin (2020) also evaluated the levels of depression, anxiety and health anxiety in Turkish society during the COVID-19 pandemic. Two online questionnaires were used, and findings imply that relevant authorities and medical professionals (i.e., psychiatry) should consider these sectors in planning psychiatric treatments and protocols in specific events or situations such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

The pandemic prompted sudden changes in various sectors, including education. Schools and universities implemented learning continuity plans, adjusting to new experiences. In the Philippines, MDL, a standard learning mode, uses teacher-prepared modules with specific competencies (Anzaldo, 2021).

Meanwhile, itmay also be described as individualised learning, where learners utilise self-learning modules (Anthony, 2020). Modules can be printed or digital, accessible through various devices and platforms like computers, smartphones, CDs, USB storage devices, and teachers' assistance.

Using modular distance learning has been reported to have positive effects on several aspects of education, most especially on the academic performance of learners. Aksan (2021) in his study found that students improved their academic performance using modular distance learning and encountered few challenges while using the modules. Modular distance learning has been found to enhance family ties, promote independent learning, and be cost-effective for ensuring continuous learning continuity (Dargo et al., 2021).

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

This investigation is grounded on objectivist epistemology, a theory of knowledge concerning beliefs about how phenomena come to be known (Giacomini, 2010); that is, how valid knowledge is produced. It holds that meaning, and therefore meaningful reality exists apart from the operation of any consciousness (Crotty, 1998) and that careful Research can attain that objective truth and meaning (Esterberg, 2002). Objectivist epistemology underpins the theoretical perspective of positivism, which informs the present study. The positivism paradigm describes an approach to studying society that specifically utilises scientific evidence such as statistics, experiments, and qualitative results to uncover the truth about society’s functions (Crossman, 2021). It assumes that the social world is inherently knowable and that people can all agree on the nature of social reality (Esterberg, 2002). Research done in this theoretical perspective might select descriptive Research and employ the quantitative statistical analysis method (Crotty, 1998).

3.2. Respondents

The study recruited 360 first-year to third-year students of WVSU-HCC during the second semester of the Academic Year 2020-2021 to participate in the study. Only first-year to third-year students participated in the study because there were no fourth-year students. Because of the implementation of the new K-to-12 curricula in 2019, it can be noted that the last batch of the old curriculum had already graduated in 2019, while the first batch of the K-to-12 Curriculum is third-year students now; hence, there are no fourth-year students yet. Students' ages usually range from 18 to 22 years old. The respondents were chosen using stratified random sampling based on degree program and year level. This sampling method is defined as a sampling method done by taking observations from a population to make inferences about the population in general (Glasgow, 2005).

The process involves dividing sampling units into subpopulations (i.e., strata) followed by a simple random sampling and then weighing and combining the resulting subsamples to form a stratified random sample.

3.3. Data Collection

The main goal of this study is to examine the anxiety levels experienced by students while using MDL during the pandemic. The data collected include participants' personal profiles and anxiety levels. After which, the data is analysed using appropriate statistical tools and interpreted accordingly.

The study involved first-year to third-year students at WVSU-HCC during the second semester of the 2020-2021 school year. Since March 2020, the campus has implemented MDL, with campus personnel delivering modules to different Local Government Units (LGUs). For large LGUs with mountainous areas, barangay captains assign a person to retrieve or keep modules. This method helps students avoid travel, time, and money while reducing the risk of COVID-19 infection.

An online survey was conducted among students to develop an anxiety rating scale for implementing MDL. The survey asked students about their experiences, concerns, and challenges. The Anxiety Rating Scale was developed based on these responses. After validation by experts, the instruments were pilot-tested among non-samples. The instruments were uploaded to Google Drive and sent to students via Messenger, with their consent included. The study was voluntary, with students' information used only for the study and their names kept anonymous.

3.4. Instrumentation

The study used the Personal Profile Form and the Anxiety Rating Scale to gather data. These instruments were employed to thoroughly describe the students' anxiety levels in terms of the different aspects of their profiles, such as gender, geographical location, availability of gadgets, the daily average number of hours spent studying, and availability of study/support group.

3.4.1. Personal Profile Form:

This form was utilised to collect data on the student's demographic information, which served as a basis forcategorising the independent variables. The profile collected students' information, including the following: gender (male, female), geographical location (urban or rural), availability of gadgets (one, two and three or more devices), access to an internet connection (excellent, good, and bad), the daily average number of hours spent studying (one, two, three and four or more), and availability of study/support group (always available, sometimes available, and none at all).

3.4.2. Anxiety Rating Scale:

A survey was conducted among students to gauge their anxiety about implementing MDL during the pandemic. A 27-item rating scale was developed, modified by a panel of experts, and added to 30 items.

The rating scale was then pilot-tested among 50 students of the campus who were non-samples of the study. Using Cronbach alpha, the instrument's reliability was .88, which, according to Sekaran (2003), is interpreted as "good". The following scale was used to analyse the means obtained: 1.00-1.60=Very High; 1.61-2.20=High; 2.21-2.80=Moderate; 2.81-3.40=Low; and 3.41-4.00 = Very Low.

3.5. Statistical Data Analysis Procedure

The data gathered in this Research were subjected to appropriate descriptive and inferential statistics using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Software Version 26. For Descriptive Data Analyses, m*eans* and s*tandard deviations* were employed. On the other hand, t-tests *for Independent Samples and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)* were used for the Inferential Data Analyses. Also, Hochberg's GT2 post-hoc test in ANOVA was utilised to determine the pairs of sub-categories which are significantly different. This tool is appropriate when sample sizes are very different, as in the case of this study. All inferential tests were set at a 0.05 level of significance

4. Resultand Discussions

4.1. Anxiety towards MDL

Means were utilised to determine the student's anxiety level towards MDL. Results showed that, generally, the students are highly anxious (M=1.95, SD=0.37). Regarding gender, the males are more highly nervous than their female counterparts (M=1.92, SD=0.37 and M=0.96, SD=0.36, respectively). Ajmal and colleagues (2019) found that distance learning caused anxiety among university students, suggesting counselling and behavioural techniques as potential solutions to manage these anxieties.

When students are grouped by geographical location, those living in the city/town proper are more anxious than those living in the barangay areas (M=1.94, SD=0.36 and M=2.01, SD=0.40). Research on geographical location and students' anxiety levels suggests that urban settings, such as cities like Mumbai, may significantly influence anxiety levels, as students tend to experience fast-paced life in these areas (Karande et al., 2018).

Table 1.Means and Standard Deviations in Anxiety towards MDL according to Gender

and Geographical Location

	n	Mean	Interpretation	SD
Gender				
Male	93	1.92	High	0.37
Female	267	1.96	High	0.36
Geographical Location				
Barangay	49	2.01	High	0.40
City Proper	311	1.94	High	0.36
Total	**360**	**1.95**	**High**	**0.37**

Note: 1.00-1.60=Very High; 1.61-2.20=High; 2.21-2.80=Moderate; 2.81-3.40=Low;

3.41-4.00=Very Low

Regardingthe number of gadgets available for students to use in their studies, those with only one, usually a smartphone, are more highly anxious (M=1.91, SD=0.35) than those with two or more gadgets. It is worth mentioning that the mean anxiety of those with three or more devices is 2.19, which is 0.02 short of falling into the next category, which is moderately anxious.A recent study in the Philippines found that students without technological devices generally experienced higher levels of anxiety related to COVID-19(Cleofas et al., 2021). It was also reported by Poudel and others (2020) that a social disadvantage, such as a lack of technological devices or gadgets, can increase anxiety.

A moderately anxious group of students with strong internet connections, enabling messaging, email, and virtual meetings like Zoom and Google Meet, outperforms all independent variables (M=2.24, SD=0.38). Poudel and others (2020) COVID-19 has significantly impacted people's health, leading to financial crises and potential family breakdowns. This instability affects children's access to education resources, causing similar issues in previous Research.

When students are grouped according to the daily average number of hours studying, those who spent the least hours are the most highly anxious (M=1.78, SD=0.36). Those who consumedthe most significant number of hours were the ones who were least highly anxious (M=2.04, SD=0.36).Jones and colleagues (2018) found that college students' anxiety levels may be attributed to poor time management skills, which may hinder their ability to study effectively.

In respect to the availability of study/support group, students who always had peers or adults to discuss lessons with are the least highly anxious (M=2.06, SD=0.38), and those who have no support group are the most highly anxious (M=1.87, S=0.35).Social interaction is also crucial in attaining goals (i.e., academic goals).Naceanceno (2021) suggests that social interactions contribute to students' mental health stability, particularly during the pandemic. Students without support groups showed higher anxiety levels compared to peers or adults.

Table 2.Means and Standard Deviations in Anxiety towards MDL according to Number of Gadgets, Access to Internet Connection, Average Daily Study Time, and Availability of Study Group

	n	Mean	Interpretation	SD
No. of Gadgets				
One	289	1.91	High	0.35
Two	65	2.09	High	0.40
Three or more	6	2.19	High	0.43
Internet Connectivity				
Excellent	27	2.24	Moderate	0.38
Good	210	1.97	High	0.36
Bad	123	1.85	High	0.33
Average Daily Study Time				
Less than 1 hr	44	1.78	High	0.36
1-3 hrs	174	1.91	High	0.35
More than 3 hr	142	2.04	High	0.36
Availability of Study Group				
Always	31	2.06	High	0.38
Sometimes	279	1.95	High	0.37
None	50	1.87	High	0.35

Note: 1.00-1.60=Very High; 1.61-2.20=High; 2.21-2.80=Moderate; 2.81-3.40=Low; 3.41-4.00=Very Low

4.2. Significant Differences in Anxiety Towards MDL

The study aimed to identify gender and geographical differences in students' anxiety levels, but no significant differences were found when grouped by gender. (t(358)=0.533, p=0.468). Likewise, students' anxiety towards MDL is not statistically different when grouped according togeographical location(t(358)=1.266, p=0.206).

Table 3. The t-test Results on the Difference in Anxiety according to Gender and Geographical Location

Category	Mean	*df*	*t*	*p*	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference

	Difference				Lower	Upper
Gender	0.04	358	0.533	0.468	-0.12	0.05
Geographical Location	0.07	358	1.266	0.206	-0.04	0.18

Note: *$p \leq .05$

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) on students' anxiety toward MDL was calculated to compare the means of students' anxiety levels in terms of gender and location. According to the accessibility of devices, there was a statistically significant difference in the level of anxiety among students [F(2, 357)=7.815, p=0.000]. The mean score for individuals using just one gadget (M=4.20, SD=1.30) substantially varied from those using two gadgets (M=2.20, SD=0.84), according to post hoc comparisons using Hochber's GT2 Post hoc Test. However, there was no discernible difference between those with two devices and those with three (M=3.60, SD=0.89).

F(2, 357)=14.472, p=0.000, a statistically significant difference in access to the internet across students was also discovered by ANOVA. Post hoc analyses revealed a difference between excellent and good connection (p=0.001), good and bad connection (p=0.000), and good and bad connection (p=0.009) in the mean scores for each category. Failure in distance learning is one of the many studied consequences of the epidemic on pupils. According to researchers Fawaz et al. (2020), this is due to the high calibreof instructional resources, particularly students' availability of reliable internet connectivity. As a result, students at all levels experience anxiety due to these worries (Cleofas et al., 2021; Cedeo et al., 2021).

The number of hours spent by the students studying their lessons significantly differed in their anxiety level, F(3, 356)=6.993, p=0.000. Post hoc comparisons indicated significant differences in the following mean scores: One and three hours (p=0.001), and one and four or more hours (p=0.001). No significant differences were found between one and two hours, two and three hours and two and four or more hours. Ilhamdaniah and others (2020) suggest that students' time management skills significantly impact their success in distance learning, while a current study found increased anxiety levels during remote learning, with no significant difference in anxiety levels based on support group availability.

Table 4.ANOVA Results for the Differences in Anxiety according to Availability of Gadgets, Access to Internet Connection, Daily Average Study Time and Availability of Study Group

	Sum of Squares	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
Availability of Gadgets					
Between Groups	2.017	2	1.009	7.815	0.000
Within Groups	46.074	357	0.129		
Access to Internet Connection,					
Between Groups	3.607	2	1.803	14.472	0.000
Within Groups	44.484	357	0.125		
Daily Average Study Time					
Between Groups	2.676	3	0.892	6.993	0.000
Within Groups	45.415	356	0.128		
Availability of Study Group					
Between Groups	0.649	2	0.325	2.443	0.088

Within Groups	47.442	357	0.133
Total	**48.091**	**359**	

Note: *$p \leq .05$

4.3. College Students' Sources of Anxiety

Out of 30 items in the Anxiety Rating Scale, two items received means which fall on the "very high anxiety" level, 19 on the "high anxiety" and 11 on the "moderate anxiety". As an entire group, the students are most highly anxious about the following:

Table 6.Students' Sources of High Anxiety as an Entire Group

Item No.	Statement
5	I wish the modules included more examples for us to understand concepts better.
13	I might need to improve in the subject.

Students expressed concerns about insufficient explanations and examples in their modules due to budget constraints during the pandemic. The school administration explained that the campus had to modify budget practices and adopt alternative solutions. Students were provided soft copies of the modules, but internet connectivity issues remained a concern. Simbulan (2020) reports that despite the pandemic's efforts by higher education institutions, some remote and online classes were suspended due to students' access to resources.

Due to the distance learning modality, the pandemic has increased students' anxiety about failing subjects, particularly item 13. Factors contributing to this anxiety include distractions, lack of knowledgeable teachers, and delays in receiving teacher feedback. Students may need help understanding the correctness of their answers in assessments and their academic performance, which can be challenging for those who used to listen to teachers in the comfort of their classrooms.

Students, regardless of gender, are highly anxious about missing announcements due to poor internet connectivity in their areas. General announcements are made on the campus' Facebook page, while course-based announcements are on the Facebook messenger class group chat. Students from areas with unstable internet connections must travel to higher grounds for connection, which can take days or weeks due to travel restrictions and health and safety protocols. This absence from group chats causes anxiety and makes it difficult for students to find important announcements made weeks or days ago.

Table 6.Students' Sources of High Anxiety According to Gender

Item No.	Statement
Male Students	
5	I wish the modules included more examples for us to understand concepts better.
13	I might need to improve in the subject.
14	I am afraid I will not pass the Board Exam/OJT/Internship.
15	I am afraid to miss some announcements.
1	I find some lessons very difficult to understand.
Female Students	
13	I may need to improve in the subject.

5	I wish the modules included more examples for us to understand concepts better.
15	I am afraid to miss some announcements.

Male students experience anxiety about licensure failure in item 14 and difficulty understanding lessons in item 1, both academic items. This anxiety is attributed to their lower diligence compared to female students.

Urban students are more anxious than those from rural areas due to COVID-19 cases and lockdowns, despite being closer to school and having better internet connections. Urban students fear failing subjects and hope for better modules, while rural students express fear of failing and hope for more lesson examples. This situation highlights the need for better education in urban areas.

Table 7. Students' Sources of High Anxiety According to Geographical Location

Item No.	Statement
Rural (Barangay)	
13	I might need to improve in the subject.
5	I wish the modules included more examples for us to understand concepts better.
Urban (City/Town Proper)	
5	I wish the modules included more examples for us to understand concepts better.
13	I may need to improve in the subject.
14	I am afraid I will not pass the Board Exam/OJT/Internship.
15	I am afraid to miss some announcements.

Ironically, those with three or more gadgets are highly anxious about more items. However, only six out of 360 students have three or more gadgets, causing statistical issues as means can be easily influenced by extreme scores.

Table 8.Students' Sources of High Anxiety According to Availability of Gadget

Item No.	Statement
One Gadget	
13	I may fail in the subject.
5	I wish the modules included more examples for us to understand concepts better.
14	I am afraid I will not pass the Board Exam/OJT/Internship.
15	I am afraid to miss some announcements.
Two Gadgets	
5	I wish the modules included more examples for us to understand concepts better.
15	I am afraid to miss some announcements.
Three Gadgets	
10	I am hesitant to ask my teachers regarding my questions about some lessons or instructions.

5	I wish the modules included more examples for us to understand concepts better.
12	I worry my teachers will give us examinations and I must prepare.
13	I might fail in the subject.
15	I am afraid to miss some announcements.
29	I get mentally drained by just looking at my modules.
30	I tend to procrastinate, making me feel stressed during the submission deadline.

Those with excellent internet connections are not highly anxious about any items. As expected, those with a bad internet connection expressed high anxiety in Item 21.

Table 9.Students' Sources of High Anxiety According to Internet Connection

Item No.	Statement
Good internet connection	
13	I might fail in the subject.
5	I wish the modules included more examples for us to understand concepts better.
Bad internet connection	
13	I may fail in the subject.
15	I am afraid to miss some announcements.
5	I wish the modules included more examples for us to understand concepts better.
21	There is no stable signal for cell phones in our area.
14	I am afraid I will not pass the Board Exam/OJT/Internship.

Students who spend around one hour a day studying experience high anxiety about various items, including 8, 4, 1, and 17. This anxiety can be attributed to not studying or lack of time and can also be influenced by the pandemic's impact on academics. Sahin and others (2022) found that students' thriving levels during the pandemic have been negatively impacted, with those with low thriving levels experiencing increased stress and anxiety due to time constraints for tasks, assignments, and projects.

Table 10.Students' Sources of High Anxiety According to Daily Average Number of Hours Studying

Item No.	**Statement**
Study for One Hour	
13	I may fail in the subject.
5	I wish the modules included more examples for us to understand concepts better.
8	I panic when a teacher announces the deadline.
4	I need to gain knowledge about some of the topics.
14	I am afraid I will not pass the Board Exam/OJT/Internship.
1	I find some lessons very difficult to understand.

17	I need help concentrating on what I am reading/studying at home.
15	I am afraid to miss some announcements.
29	I get mentally drained by just looking at my modules.
30	I tend to procrastinate, making me feel stressed during the submission deadline.
Study for Two Hours	
13	I might fail in the subject.
5	I wish the modules included more examples for us to understand concepts better.
14	I am afraid I will not pass the Board Exam/OJT/Internship.
15	I am afraid to miss some announcements.
Study for Three Hours	
5	I wish the modules included more examples for us to understand concepts better.
Study for Four or more Hours	
13	I may fail in the subject.
5	I wish the modules included more examples for us to understand concepts better.
15	I am afraid to miss some announcements.

Students with no study/support groups are highly anxious that no one at home can help them in their lessons. Travel restrictions and unavailability of internet connection compounded this concern.

Table 11.Students' Sources of High Anxiety According to Availability of Study/Support Group

Item No.	Statement
Always	
13	I may fail in the subject.
15	I am afraid to miss some announcements.
Sometimes	
5	I wish the modules included more examples for us to understand concepts better.
13	I may fail in the subject.
14	I am afraid I will not pass the Board Exam/OJT/Internship.
None	
5	I wish the modules included more examples for us to understand concepts better.
13	I may fail in the subject.
25	I need someone at home who can help me with my questions about my lessons.
18	I need financial support for my cell phone load when I do Research or to download files.
15	I am afraid to miss some announcements.

5. Conclusions

The study reveals that students are generally anxious about MDL, with high anxiety levels in all sub-categories. However, those with excellent internet access experienced moderate anxiety. The pandemic's hostile psychological atmosphere may have contributed to students' anxiety, as isolation, migration from face-to-face classes, financial hardships, job loss, and loss of family members may have affected their mental health. Internet access is a significant source of anxiety, with students with multiple gadgets feeling more secure. Mobile phones, which require internet connectivity or additional financial expenses, are most commonly used. Students with sufficient study time, spending at least three hours a day, tend to have lower anxiety levels. Studying longer or allocating more time can help students answer module assessments and prepare for exams, reducing anxiety levels.

7. Recommendations

In the light of the conclusions and findings of the study, the following recommendations are advanced:

- Parents are encouraged to prioritise providing gadgets to their children for MDL instruction, and school officials may develop fundraising schemes to assist students unable to afford them.
- The recommendation is to allocate a budget for smartphone load to enable students to use data for internet access.
- The school may enhance printed modules with additional explanations and examples to address gadgets and internet connection issues, reducing students' dependence on the internet and gadgets for course requirements.
- The school should develop strategies to motivate students to continue their studies despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, including urging them to spend at least three hours a day on their lessons, as this study found that this approach can significantly reduce their anxiety towards the new learning modality.

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